

or presenting symptoms of which the patient complains. Each section is concluded by a brief outline of the methods available for further investigation of the case.

This is not a book in which to learn "diseases," but it is an excellent one from which to learn clinical medicine.

R. A. W.

BRITISH OBSTETRIC AND GYNÆCOLOGICAL PRACTICE. By Sir Eardley Holland, M.D.(Lond.), F.R.C.P., F.R.C.S., F.R.C.O.G., and Aleck Bourne, M.A., M.B., B.Ch. (Cantab.), F.R.C.S., F.R.C.O.G. Second Edition. (Pp. xiv + 1228; illustrated. 147s.) London: Heinemann Medical Books, 1959.

THE launching of a very large textbook of obstetrics compiled by over forty contributors was an immense task and inevitably the first edition of *British Obstetric Practice* contained minor errors and some overlapping of the subject matter. These faults have been eliminated in the present edition and the book has been drastically revised to include many of the recent advances in obstetrics.

New chapters on the physiology of the placenta and the adaptation of the foetus from intrauterine to extrauterine life are valuable and welcome additions. There are many gaps to be filled in the knowledge of placental physiology but the new chapter tackles the subject very well and includes much information of great practical value. The reader will also appreciate how much remains to be discovered and that only by further research into placental physiology will some of the causes of stillbirth be revealed.

Perinatal mortality is mainly influenced by the intrauterine environment, by the stress of labour, and by the immediate adaptation from intrauterine to extrauterine life. An excellent account of this adaptation is given in a new chapter and the application of physiological principles to the resuscitation of the newborn has rationalized many of the methods.

The chapter on the physiology of pregnancy in the first edition has not been included, but the subject matter has been added to the appropriate chapters. While this leads to much searching for information in different parts of the book, it has made the individual chapters on such subjects as cardiac disease much more complete by commencing with a full and accurate account of the relevant physiology.

The account of normal pregnancy and labour are excellent and newer studies on uterine action, normal and abnormal, have been incorporated.

There is a growing tendency to omit vaginal examination as part of ante-natal supervision, and the reviewer is pleased to note that this authoritative book categorically states that this should always be made. Younger (and some older) obstetricians please note!

The bulk of the book deals with abnormal midwifery and a very full and accurate account is given of the many problems, supported by a comprehensive and up-to-date bibliography.

Much of the confusion regarding the ætiology of pre-eclampsia has been dispelled in the excellent section on toxæmias of pregnancy and, wisely, only relevant theories and established facts are presented.

Some very interesting advances in the ætiology and classification of contracted pelvis are presented and the Caldwell and Moloy classification of "normal" pelvic variations has been rightly criticized.

The operation of symphysiotomy is not widely practised in the United Kingdom but, should any obstetrician wish guidance regarding the technique, a simple and relatively safe method is fully described.

In a short review it is quite impossible to do full justice to every section of the book. There are a few minor points regarding treatment with which some obstetricians would disagree, but the recommended management of the different complications are thoroughly sound and represent the view of the great majority of British obstetricians.

British Obstetric Practice has achieved its purpose in providing a complete and authoritative account of obstetrics. It can be thoroughly recommended to all practitioners and obstetricians, and will be of especial value to those preparing for higher qualifications in obstetrics.

W. G. M.